

Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases

- A **preposition** shows the relationship of a noun or pronoun to another word in the sentence.

I jumped into the creek.

The word "into" shows the relationship
between the verb "jumped" and the noun "creek"

- An **object of the preposition** is the last word in the prepositional phrase. The object of the preposition answers – "Preposition what/whom?"

The bird flew into the window.

Into what? The window.

- A **prepositional phrase** begins with a preposition and ends with its object.

The boat skimmed across the water.

Important Ideas to Remember about Prepositional Phrases

1. Prepositional phrases add useful information to a sentence, but they are not necessary for the sentence to be complete.
2. Prepositional phrases will never contain the subject or verb of the sentence.

Bob was (in the hospital).

(During the game,) we sat (on the bleachers)(in the cold)(for hours.)

3. Prepositions or adverbs? Prepositions always have objects, adverbs never have objects.

I put the trash down.

I put the trash down the garbage chute.

4. Prepositional phrase or Infinitive? An infinitive begins with the word "to" and is followed immediately by a verb. A prepositional phrase may begin with the word "to" and is followed by a noun or pronoun.

I am walking to the store.

I am walking to get milk.

5. Prepositional phrase or subordinate clause? A prepositional phrase contains the preposition, an adjective or two, and the object of the preposition. A prepositional phrase will not contain a verb. A subordinate clause will begin with a word that can be a preposition but will be followed by a subject and verb.

After a big dinner, I like to relax on the couch.

After I eat a big dinner, I like to relax on the couch.

Common Prepositions		
aboard about above across after against along amid among around as at barring before behind below beneath beside besides between beyond but by concerning considering	despite down during except for from in inside into like near of off on onto opposite out outside over past regarding round since through throughout	till to toward under underneath until up upon with within without <u>May be a preposition or subordinating conjunction</u> after before since till Until <u>May be a preposition or begin an infinitive</u> to
Compound Prepositions		
according to ahead of apart from as of aside from because of by means of	by way of in addition to in back of in front of in place of in regard to in spite of	instead of in view of next to off of on account of out of owing to prior to

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An Introduction to Prepositional Phrases

Exercise A: Place a preposition or compound preposition in the space provided; be sure that the sentence maintains clear logic as a result. Then, place parenthesis around all prepositional phrases. Remember: all prepositional phrases begin with a preposition and end with a noun or pronoun that acts as its object.

1. Every store (_____ this one) is having a sale.
(single preposition)
2. Water lilies floated _____ the surface of the pond.
(single preposition)
3. Some dwarf fruit trees grew _____ the house.
(compound preposition)
4. _____ the authorities, the alleged robbers were caught.
(compound preposition)
5. A lantern's gleam could be seen _____ the tunnel.
(single preposition)
6. Please buy construction paper _____ scissors and glue.
(compound preposition)
7. Wonder Woman jumped _____ the balcony.
(single preposition)
8. Randy has strong feelings _____ discrimination.
(single preposition)
9. _____ the water shortage, we will be careful.
(compound preposition)
10. His ancestors left Ireland _____ the potato famine.
(single preposition)

Exercise B: Place parenthesis around all prepositional phrases. Remember: all prepositional phrases begin with a preposition and end with a noun or pronoun that acts as its object.

1. (In back of the shop) the owner and his son baked bread.
2. Step outside the door and see the sunset.
3. We ran out of money during our shopping spree.
4. According to the President's speech, we need a greater awareness of pollution problems.
5. Chinese lanterns were hung from the ceiling.
6. He carefully placed the glass figurine next to the vase.
7. The terrified rabbit slipped between the fence posts and ran to safety.
8. Billy the Kid stayed ahead of his pursuers by means of a stolen horse.

9. Don't walk in the rain without an umbrella and galoshes.
10. The long-distance runner fell behind the others.

Exercise C: Adverbs or Prepositions? Determine whether the underlined word is acting as a preposition or as an adverb. Remember: Prepositions have objects; adverbs do not. If the word is a preposition, place parenthesis the prepositional phrase.

1. Adverb – There is no answer to “on what?”
Hang on and don't let go!
2. Preposition – Lamp is the answer to the question “below what?”
Put the food below the heat lamp.
3. No one can make that horse go over a bridge but him.
4. The snail crept along the bottom of the sandy fish tank.
5. On account of your continual lateness, you have fallen behind.
6. Walk right in if you don't find us at home.
7. She put her work aside and talked with me.
8. The balloon floated up higher and higher.
9. Beneath our house are the remains of a colonial cabin.
10. We searched around all day for the lost money.
11. The snoring told him someone slept within.
12. Keep all of your business dealings above ground.

Exercise D: Adverbs or Prepositions? This time find the word that may act as either a preposition or an adverb; then, determine whether it is acting as a preposition or as an adverb. Remember: Prepositions have objects; adverbs do not. If the word is a preposition, place parenthesis the prepositional phrase.

1. Please lean across the table and hand me the salt.
2. We had few supplies after the long winter months.
3. Anthony spent his money and then had to go without
4. Look around and see what you want.
5. I put the cat inside and locked the door.
6. They glanced behind them to see if they were being followed.

7. Rachel Carson wrote books about the environment.
8. An eagle swooped down and struck its victim.
9. The vastness of the universe is beyond our imagination.
10. You will find the tool shed beside the garage.

Exercise E: Mastering Prepositional Phrases - Place parenthesis around all prepositional phrases. Remember: all prepositional phrases begin with a preposition and end with a noun or pronoun that acts as its object.

1. By the shining water stood the wigwam of Nokomis.
2. They traveled from Europe to the African coast.
3. The shack was built beside the railroad tracks.
4. The campers dove into the water quickly.
5. I never heard about that problem.
6. During the winter, everyone slides down the slopes.
7. There is a hole in the bottom of this cup.
8. The children walked along the beach.
9. Was the mitten under the couch?
10. A few firefighters climbed up the ladders.
11. We bought a tie for Dad.
12. The pot simmered on the stove.
13. The line around the theater was very long.
14. Rumpelstiltskin was the name of the dwarf.
15. The Mississippi is the largest of our rivers.
16. Put the packages on the counter.
17. We relaxed on the beach.
18. Isaac Newton sat beneath an apple tree.
19. The burglar looked around the room.
20. They told us about the baby's birth.

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Prepositional Phrases Review #2

Prepositional Phrase or Adverb? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all adverbs and label them.

1. I looked past the door to the backyard.
2. When the timer goes off, put the pizza in.
3. The cat often hides under the bed or behind the sofa.
4. Considering the long wait at the restaurant, we should probably eat in.
5. I threw the water balloon out of the window, and it hit the ground below.
6. We walked across the bridge that was between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
7. They started the activity with enthusiasm and maintained it throughout the entire day.
8. Turn the stove on; then, wait for the beeping noise.

Prepositional Phrase or Infinitive? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all infinitives- underline and label them.

1. My grandmother likes to bargain at the outdoor market.
2. Give a short explanation to Glenn, but do not tell him about the specific details.
3. It took a lot of convincing to get my mother to lend me the car for the evening.
4. On my way to town, I got a flat tire.
5. We gave the antique mirror that hangs over the mantel above the fireplace to our mother.
6. It is not easy to skate on the ice without falling.
7. We extended invitations to everyone on the list, but we did not want to invite the guy who stole our television.
8. The key to success is to work hard.

Prepositional Phrase or Subordinate Clause? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all subordinate clauses- underline and label them.

1. Before you leave for your trip, pack your things in a carryon bag.
2. Since the turn of the century, there have been 100s of technological advancements.
3. It is hard to believe that Leonardo DiCaprio was in 6 different television shows before the age of eight.
4. Paul will go participate in the competition until he is defeated by an opponent.
5. Because of the confusion regarding the traffic signs, there were several accidents in that spot.
6. Most streetlights do not turn on until it gets dark.
7. The game was played after the rain stopped.
8. The show is on after the 11 o'clock news.
9. It often ruins your appetite to eat candy before your dinner.
10. After we read the novel *Fahrenheit 451*, we will watch a film that conveys similar themes.
11. I can't get to the store until tomorrow.
12. She wanted to try the hiking route because so many people had raved about it.

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Prepositional Phrases Practice #2.5

Section I: Identify the prepositional phrases in each of the following sentences. There may be more than one prepositional phrase in each sentence or none at all.

1. Several of our closest friends have stopped at our house in recent days.
2. Because of his background as a ninja, he could move through the room without detection.
3. He started by sliding across the carpet; then, he slipped under the couch.
4. Throughout the day, each of the candidates gave a speech to his constituents from the lectern.
5. Besides the period, a semi-colon can be used for a stopping point between two independent clauses.
6. Barring any other setbacks, he will return to the team's lineup after some rest and therapy.
7. Once we got off of the airplane, we went directly to the state's capitol building for a tour.
8. Each passenger had a different destination on his itinerary.
9. In addition to the harmonica around her neck, she had a drum strapped to her back and cymbals taped onto her knees.
10. At the time of court hearing, there was very little evidence against the defendant.

Section II: Prepositional Phrase or Adverb? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all adverbs and label them.

11. The air pump was on, and the balloon blew up.
12. Before the performance, the actors brought all of the costuming materials in.
13. Her contentious attitude during the conversation led to an argument between the two friends that went on and on.
14. Because of the sinuous path of the race course, he quickly fell behind.
15. She hung back while others ran past, but in the final moments she burst through the finish line in first place.
16. Despite the harsh conditions, we pushed through.

Section III: Prepositional Phrase or Infinitive? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all infinitives- underline and label them.

17. He gave 10% of his pay to help the needy with their bills.
18. She was a well-known exponent of proper grammar, so no one was surprised by her attempts to correct everyone's incorrect usage.
19. My sister asked a question about the tuba to ensure that she was playing in a way that would not lead to a discordant sound.
20. On our way to the concert, we decided to listen to the band's latest album.
21. We sold the antique album on ebay for a dollar to help pay for the newest one.
22. It is challenging to memorize all of the prepositions.

Section IV: Prepositional Phrase or Subordinate Clause? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all subordinate clauses- underline and label them.

23. Before the early morning meeting, I filled my stomach with bacon and eggs.
24. Before the sun had risen in the sky, I filled my stomach with oatmeal and grapefruit.
25. Because cell phones are distracting, you should not use yours while operating a vehicle.
26. After I wrote my essay, I asked a peer for help with it since it was 25% of our marking period grade.
27. Bob kept saying he would not be there until tomorrow, but he was still there before the rest of us arrived.
28. Because of her early arrival, she thought bob would arrive after her.

Section V: Prepositional Phrase or? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all adverbs and label them. Find all infinitives- underline and label them. Find all subordinate clauses- underline and label them.

29. Michael asked to get an extra leash for his dog because she runs away all of the time.
30. The mayor's decision came out before anyone had a chance to respond..
31. After we evaluated the possibilities, we decided to go to Disney World for vacation.
32. Until coffee becomes illegal, people will continue to drink it to help them get through the morning.

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Prepositional Phrases Practice #3

Section I: Identify the prepositional phrases in each of the following sentences. There may be more than one prepositional phrase in each sentence or none at all.

1. Many of the documents on the website have been identified as forgeries.
2. Because of her experience as a scuba instructor, she was able to remain calm under pressure.
3. She let the air out of the tank slowly, and settled into a safe area of the ocean floor.
4. She could see several ships cruise past her, but she did not move until the arrival of the rescue boat.
5. Besides the comma, dashes may also be used as a punctuation mark that indicates the need for a pause.
6. Although I awoke early in the morning, I still ended up being late for the interview.
7. Once we got aboard the train, we had to sit between two strangers during most of the ride.
8. Each person had his tickets on the seat ahead of him except Jimmy.
9. In addition to the tickets, most people also had ipods or kindles in their hands.
10. At the age of 12, Wilt Chamberlain was already 6'8" tall.

Section II: Prepositional Phrase or Adverb? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all adverbs and label them.

11. The piano player put his music onto the music stand.
12. During the horrible rain storm, we had to bring everything in.
13. Her guise of a concerned citizen was quickly seen through; she only cared about the traffic in front of her house.
14. Because of the speed of the competition she quickly fell behind.
15. She hung back while others ran past, but in the final moments she burst through the finish line in first place.
16. On account of the windy conditions, we had to look up to avoid getting dirt in our eyes.

Section III: Prepositional Phrase or Infinitive? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all infinitives- underline and label them.

17. We spent hours trying to decide on a color for the room.
18. Despite the waiter's friendly demeanor, he had to go back to the kitchen 100 times because he forgot to get us everything we ordered.
19. It required an extensive discussion about the rules to convince everyone that you could go to the dictionary to resolve a question about the word's definition.
20. On our way to the show, we decided to stop for ice-cream.
21. We sold the old record player that was in our den to the guy who lives next to us.
22. It is challenging to memorize all of the prepositions.

Section IV: Prepositional Phrase or Subordinate Clause? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all subordinate clauses- underline and label them.

23. The dessert was served after the main meal.
24. Without running, he found all of the Easter eggs before the other kids found one.
25. Because cell phones are distracting, you should not use yours while operating a vehicle.
26. After we read the book, we had a great discussion about its major themes.
27. Frank kept jumping into the pool, until he realized there was a killer whale in the deep end.
28. He will not go back in there until tomorrow.

Section V: Prepositional Phrase or? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all adverbs and label them. Find all infinitives- underline and label them. Find all subordinate clauses- underline and label them.

29. She asked to stay out with her friends until 11 o'clock on weeknights.
30. The television report came out before any newspapers had published the details.
31. After he discussed the possibilities, he chose to write his essay about global warming.
32. Before the teacher asked any questions, I looked at my study guide to determine what was most important.

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Quick Prepositional Phrase Review (Before the Test)

Section I: Identify the prepositional phrases in each of the following sentences. There may be more than one prepositional phrase in each sentence or none at all.

1. According to the President's speech, we need a greater awareness of pollution problems.
2. Franklin D. Roosevelt was an excellent swimmer despite suffering from the after effects of polio.
3. He carefully placed the glass figurine next to the vase.
4. The terrified rabbit slipped between the fence posts and ran to safety.

Section II: Prepositional Phrase or Adverb? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all adverbs and label them.

5. The spaghetti sauce simmered on the stove.
6. The defendant admitted that he had been to the location of the crime many times before.
7. She is such a supercilious person that she turns up her nose at people.
8. The song was number one on the charts for a week, but it has recently moved down.

Section III: Prepositional Phrase or Infinitive? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all infinitives- underline and label them.

9. I am walking to the park after school today.
10. I want to buy a new car with my savings from my summer job.
11. The space station will be a gateway for exploration of the solar system.
12. It is not easy to skate on the ice without falling.

Section IV: Prepositional Phrase or Subordinate Clause? In each of the following sentences, find all prepositional phrases and put them in parenthesis. Find all subordinate clauses- underline and label them.

13. After the concert, the critics put the band in a category with the Beatles and the Rolling Stones.
14. Signs of trouble between England and the colonies were apparent to many people before the war started.
15. Sean will be traveling until the end of the semester.
16. Jeanine will be here until the museum closes for the night.